THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) The Indian and foreign private sector companies have shown interest for investment in the development of National Highways through private sector participation and works have been awarded to nine firms, during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 period, on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) and Annuity basis.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. To encourage the private sector investment in highway sector, Government has extended various special incentives in the form of tax concessions, duty-free import of modem high capacity equipment, capital grant, permitting foreign direct investment, external commercial borrowings and providing land free from encumbrances.

(d) Does not arise.

Increase in road accidents

†567. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India ranks third in world in the matter of road accidents;

(b) whether track cards are not demanded from 87 per cent of the drivers and the transport department do not test their knowledge about the steps to be taken in case of an emergency;

(c) if so, whether the increase in the number of road accidents in the country is due to untrained drivers; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) No, Sir. The World Road Statistics 1999, as compiled by International Road Federation, ranks India as fourth in number of road accident.

(b) The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 does not mandate the requirement for Track Cards at the time of issue of driving licenses. Under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 driving license for driving a transport vehicle is issued by the Transport Authority after being satisfied about the capability of an applicant to drive the said transport vehicle on the basis of a driving certificate issued by a recognized driving training school. The renewal of driving license is subject to such person having undergone refresher training as per the prescribed syllabus. Further,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

licensing authority has also been authorized to disqualify a driver from holding a driving license or revoke said license under circumstances indicated under Section 19 of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

(c) Analysis of road accidents indicates that nearly 75% of road accidents are attributable to drivers. The various causes for the same include overspeeding, lack of alertness, error in judgement, fatigue, lack of physical fitness, etc.

(d) Under Road Safety programmes a number of steps as indicated below are being taken:—

(i) Giving grant-in-aid to voluntary organizations for administering road safety programmes in order to create awareness among the public,

(ii) Under National Highway Accident Relief Service Scheme, from the year 2000-2001, voluntary organizations are also considered alongside State agencies,

(iii) National Award has been instituted for voluntary organizations/ individuals for outstanding work in the field of road safety.

(iv) All India Essay Competition on road safety are organized for school children for creating awareness among the school children.

(v) Observance of Road Safety Week in the first week of every year across the country etc.

(vi) Publicity campaign on Road Safety Awareness through audio-visual-print media.

(vii) Refresher training of Heavy Motor Vehicle Drivers, etc.

Road projects in Orissa

568. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the proposals submitted by the State Government of Orissa during the last three years for development of roads in the State out of the Central Road Fund;

(b) how many of those projects are now being implemented in the State with the Central Road Fund;

(c) the estimated cost of those projects and the funds released for the purpose; and